

RUSSIA AND THE WEST IN IRAN

their free moments they were friendly, cheerful, and human. The G.I.'s had none of the aloofness that so often puts a barrier between the British and native populations. The Americans were excellent customers of carpet and antique shops, were always neatly dressed and generous. The Russian troops inspired the population with an instinctive fear. There was not a hint of fear in the Iranian attitude toward the Americans. There was rather the mixed feeling that the Americans were very powerful, wealthy and therefore worthy of respect and at the same time immature as measured by the old standards of oriental cunning and experience. That those "Big Boys" from beyond the seas could harm intentionally was inconceivable.

THE PROBLEM OF AMERICAN PROPAGANDA

What has just been said about the impact of the army on Irano-American relations indicates that this influence could be treated as a sort of involuntary American propaganda. It is legitimate to ask in this connection whether, apart from this accidental publicity, anything was done deliberately to promote knowledge of American institutions, way of life, and political intentions among the people of Iran. That the spread of such knowledge would be useful to both America and Iran seems to be unquestionable. Apart from the positive value of such an information program, it could be conceived as a defensive weapon against hostile Soviet propaganda as well. It should be borne in mind that Soviet policy in Iran was not exclusively anti-British but generally anti-Western. Evidences of it were abundant. The violent campaign waged against Millspaugh and his mission by the Communist press was a case in point.

Another example
was supplied by the oil crisis. Kavtaradze's visit could
be interpreted
as an anti-American move as much as an anti-
Iranian. *Pravda's* re-
proach that the American army was in Iran illegally
was another
proof that the Russians were eager to embarrass the
Americans. It
was clear that the appearance of the United States as
a "third power"
on the Iranian stage was bound to displease the
Soviet Union and to
complicate the fulfillment of its program. If a
determined campaign
of hostility and slander was waged by one side, little
could be gained
by the other by keeping silent. Too much restraint
and silence was
bound to be interpreted in an oriental country as a
sign of weakness

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